

Message Text

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ACTION INR-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6275

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 6349

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PINR, LI

SUBJECT: NEW LIBERIAN AMBASSADOR TO GUINEA

REF: (A) CONAKRY 1641 (B) MONROVIA 6020 NOTAL (C)
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1. THE LIBERIAN GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED ON AUGUST 25 THAT
THE CURRENT LIBERIAN AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE, GABRIEL G.
FARNAGALO, WOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO CONAKRY. A REPLACEMENT
FOR FARNAGALO IN KINSHASA HAS NOT YET BEEN NAMED.
BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION REQUESTED REFTEL A FOLLOWS:

2. AMBASSADOR FARNAGALO WAS BORN MARCH 15, 1926, IN
BEHPLAY, CENTRAL PROVINCE, LIBERIA. HE WAS EDUCATED
AT CATHOLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AT SANIQUELLIE, NIMBA
COUNTY; CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL AT BUCHANAN, BASSA
COUNTY; RECEIVED B.S.E. FROM UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA.
MONROVIA, AND AN MS. DEGREE FROM UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN (SEPTEMBER 1957 - SEPTEMBER 1958). PREVIOUS
POSITIONS HELD INCLUDED: ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER
IN RURAL LIBERIA; INSTRUCTOR AT UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA
(1958-59?); PROVINCIAL SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOLS, CENTRAL
PROVINCE (1959-1964); SUPERINTENDENT OF NIMBA
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COUNTY FROM SEPTEMBER 1964 TO AUGUST 1968 (SUSPENDED
FROM OFFICE MAY 1968; DISMISSED AUGUST 1968; ARRESTED
SEPTEMBER 1968 FOR EMBEZZLEMENT); COUNSELLOR AND CONSUL
LIBERIAN EMBASSY IN ROME (1972-1974); COUNSELLOR AND
CONSUL, LIBERIAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON, D.C. (1974-1976),
AND LIBERIAN AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE (1976-1977). HE IS
A ROMAN CATHOLIC, SPEAKS SOME FRENCH AND HAS AT LEAST

THREE CHILDREN.

3. BORN OF TRIBAL PARENTS (HIS FATHER WAS MEMBER OF LIBERIAN FRONTIER FORCE), GABRIEL FARNGALO TOUGHT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IN RURAL LIBERIA FOR APPROXIMATELY 15 YEARS BEFORE COMING INTO NATIONAL PROMINENCE. IT WAS FOLLOWING HIS RETURN IN 1958 FROM ONE-YEAR PROGRAM IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SUPERVISION AT UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN THAT FARNGALO ATTRACTED ATTENTION OF THE LATE PRESIDENT TUBMAN WHO MARKED FARNGALO AS AN AMBITIOUS AND LOYAL TRIBAL MAN SUITED FOR GREATER RESPONSIBILITIES. TUBMAN APPOINTED FARNAGLO FIRST IN 1959 AS PROVINCIAL SUPERVISOR OF SCHOOLS FOR THE CENTRAL PROVINCE, AND THEN IN 1964 AS SUPERINTENDENT OF NIMBA COUNTY. EMBASSY BIO NOTES IN EARLY 1960'S LABELED FARNGALO A CAPABLE, COOPERATIVE, PRO-AMERICAN AND AMBITIOUS TRIBAL MAN WHO HAD "MADE GOOD" AND WHO HELD THE POTENTIAL OF "GREAT POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE GOVERNMENT OF LIBERIA." ONE REPORT NOTED THAT FARNGALO ASPIRED TO BECOME PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA.

4. APPARENTLY, AS SUPERINTENDENT FARNGALO PUT DISCRETION ASIDE, HE BECAME KNOWN FOR HIS GREED, CORRUPTION AND ABUSE OF THE TRIBAL POPULATION UNDER HIS CONTROL. ACTIVE IN THE ANNUAL PREPARATIONS FOR TUBMAN'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION, FARNGALO
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EXTORTED LARGE SUMS OF MONEY FOR THE CELEBRATION FROM FOREIGN CONCESSIONS OPERATING IN NIMBA (NOTABLY THE SWEDISH-AMERICAN MINING CONCERN LAMCO). HIS ABUSES OF OFFICE WERE BROUGHT TO AN END WHEN SEVERAL OF THE CHIEFS OF TRIBES IN NIMBA COUNTY IN 1968 PETITIONED TUBMAN TO INVESTIGATE COMPLAINTS AGAINST THE SUPERINTENDENT. THE SECRETARY OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS FOUND EVIDENCE OF COMMISSION OF NUMEROUS CRIMES OF BOTH FELONIES AND MISDEMEANORS" AND ORDERED THAT FARNGALO BE DISMISSED. FARNGALO WAS ACCUSED OF EMBEZZLING OVER \$54,000 WHICH INCLUDED FUNDS FROM COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS, ILLEGAL FINES IMPOSED UPON TRIBAL PEOPLE AND FUNDS EXTORTED FROM LAMCO. AFTER BEING IMPRISONED FOR A SHORT PERIOD OF TIME, FARNGALO WAS RELEASED, APPARENTLY ON ORDERS FROM TUBMAN.

5. IN 1970 FARNGALO PETITIONED TUBMAN TO CONSIDER HIM "FOR SOMETHING TO DO BECAUSE (I) HAVE SAT PATIENTLY FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS WITHOUT ANYTHING TO DO." TUBMAN IGNORED THE REQUEST.

6. FARNGALO'S PROSPECTS BRIGHTENED AGAIN IN FEBRUARY 1972 WHEN HE MARRIED PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S SPINSTER SISTER, ELFRIEDA. AFTER THE MARRIAGE, FARNGALO WAS COMMISSIONED A MEMBER OF THE LIBERIAN FOREIGN SERVICE AND BEGAN HIS DIPLOMATIC CAREER AS COUNSELLOR AND CONSUL IN ROME WHERE HE SERVED UNTIL 1974. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY A TWO-YEAR TOUR IN WASHINGTON. AS REPORTED REFTEL C, FARNGALO DID NOT IMPRESS HIS WASHINGTON COLLEAGUES. IN 1974 HE ASKED NELSON FOCKEFELLER FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO EDUCATE HIS CHILDREN IN THE UNITED STATES. IN AUGUST 1976 FARNGALO WAS NAMED AMBASSADOR TO ZAIRE. THE LIBERIAN FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS APPARENTLY NOT IMPRESSED WITH FARNGALO'S SERVICE IN KINSHASA. THE DIRECTOR FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS
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RECENTLY EXPRESSED HER DISMAY THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD "HEARD NOTHING FOR MONTHS" FROM THEIR EMBASSY IN KINSHASA IN SPITE OF HIGH LEVEL LIBERIAN CONCERN ABOUT DEVELOPMENTS IN ZAIRE FOLLOWING THE SHABA INVASION. NONETHELESS CRITICISM OF FARNGALO'S PERFORMANCE IS MUTED DUE TO HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH PRESIDENT TOLBERT.

7. AS SUPERINTENDENT OF NIMBA COUNTY, FARNGALO WAS NOTED FOR HIS EXPENSIVE TASTES IN CLOTHES AND HIS PREFERENCE FOR LARGE FORMAL PARTIES.
HORAN

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